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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 002771

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [ASEC](#) [ES](#) [ACCELERATED](#) [DEPORTATION](#)

SUBJECT: GOES, EMBASSY HOLD FIRST DEPORTATION WORKING GROUP MEETING

REF: SALVADOR 2657

Classified By: CDA Michael A. Butler. Reasons 1.4 (b,d)..

11. (C) On October 6, the joint Embassy-GOES Working Group on Accelerated Deportations held its first meeting at the Ministry of Government (Gobernacion). The GOES delegation was headed by Vice-Government Minister Rodrigo Avila, and included MinGob Executive officer (and former Migration Director) Wilfredo Rosales, new Migration Director Jorge Santivanez, and MinGob Legal Adviser Juan Bacete. Post was represented by Polcouns, A/CG, and ICE country representative. GOES Ambassador to Washington Rene Leon, who was in country on FoMin business, also joined the meeting. Both Avila and Leon opened the meeting with a very positive message affirming the GOES commitment to support the imminent accelerated deportations. Avila affirmed that President Saca has mandated that the GOES work with the USG on this issue, and has gone as far as ordering the creation of a deportee task force at MinGob, under Avila. Avila recognized that one of the GOES's biggest concerns is that they are not communicating well internally, and said that he and Leon intended to improve communication between the FoMin and MinGob, and to make the Salvadoran consulates more responsive on deportations.

12. (C) Leon said that he will ask for postponement of a meeting scheduled for October 11 between himself and Avila, and WHA DAS Fisk, explaining that the natural disaster in El Salvador has overtaken other key issues in the short term. He added that he hoped the Fisk meeting could take place in two to three weeks, and that he (Leon) wanted MinGob Figueroa to be present at that meeting. Leon said that he would try to schedule parallel meetings around the time of the Fisk meeting with DHS, DOJ, and NSC principals, as well as with WHA A/S Shannon. Both Leon and Avila stressed that the GOES wants to move forward quickly on bilateral prisoner exchange and extradition agreements, and that those issues would be at the top of their Washington agenda. Avila stated that the GOES's main concern is the impact in El Salvador of deported gang members, especially those with violent backgrounds, and violent criminals in general. In that regard, they stated that the GOES is fully committed to working closely with USG agencies to make this process as seamless as possible. The Embassy-GOES working group agreed to meet again before the GOES delegation goes to Washington. Avila committed to sharing with the working group the GOES agenda for the trip, including a non-paper containing a list of possible "deliverables" to make the deportation process smooth.

13. (C) Avila shared the following ideas, some of which may appear in the non-paper and may also be raised in Washington meetings:

- A pilot program designed to separate criminal from non-criminal deportees in the JPAT flights;
- DVC capability, paid for by the USG, to be used by GOES consular/other officials for deportee interviews;
- Creation of a GOES Interagency Deportation Unit, to coordinate tasks among relevant GOES ministries and agencies;
- USG support for biometric equipment and training, and increased sharing of biometric and other information between USG and GOES agencies, especially on gang members and violent criminals;
- Electronic delivery of prison and/or criminal records of deportees, and/or delivery of biometric print records taken by DHS.

14. (C) Comment: The GOES delegation came to the meeting well prepared and appeared to have the full support of their higher-ups, starting with President Saca. Avila's leadership on this issue is key, since he is widely viewed as a rising star in the government and has the full backing of Figueroa, Saca's closest associate. Likewise, Leon's participation will also be vital, especially in effecting much-needed communication and cooperation between the consulates and MinGob. From the enthusiasm at the meeting, we expect the GOES will want to move quickly on a number of political issues, like prisoner exchange and extradition treaties, as well as on operational issues relating to the mechanics of accelerated deportations.

Butler